



Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Robert R. Neall, Secretary

April 5, 2020

Dr. Donna S. Hanes, M.D., Chair
Maryland Commission on Kidney Disease
4201 Patterson Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21215

Dear Chair Hanes:

Thank you for the Commission's letter, dated March 31, 2020, regarding the prioritization of COVID-19 testing for patients with end-stage kidney disease (ESKD) that are being treated in outpatient hemodialysis centers.

We firmly believe that these patients are and were always intended to be in the group of "symptomatic high-risk unstable patients whose care would be altered by a diagnosis of COVID-19" for priority COVID-19 testing. We support outpatient hemodialysis centers' efforts at expanding testing for these medically fragile individuals.

As you know, there is a critical shortage of COVID-19 tests in the nation. We are working with every provider of lab tests to acquire sufficient tests for Maryland. Until COVID-19 test supplies and the chemical reagents to test them are in better supply, we encourage outpatient hemodialysis centers to work with physicians to secure the necessary diagnosis and lab test orders for potentially symptomatic COVID-19 ESKD patients. We hope to roll out additional testing as soon as supplies are available.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or Director of Governmental Affairs Webster Ye at 410.260.3190 or at webster.ye@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

Robert R. Neall
Secretary